



**National
Transportation
Safety Board**

Collision of Two WMATA Metrorail Trains Near Fort Totten Station, June 22, 2009

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Accident Summary

- June 22, 2009
- WMATA Metrorail
- Near Fort Totten Station
- Nine fatalities, 52 injuries
- \$12 million in damages



Accident Summary

- Train control system failure
- Train was not detected
- Train control system did not provide safe separation



Accident Summary

- Train control system was being upgraded
- Verification testing did not identify problem
- Out of date verification test was used



Multiple Safety Issues

- Rail Car Issues
- Train Control System
- Internal Communications
- Safety Culture
- Safety Oversight



Ineffective Safety Culture

- General Manager did not provide adequate information about critical safety issues
- Board of Directors did not seek information about critical safety issues
- Board of Directors did not exercise oversight responsibility for system safety



Ineffective Safety Culture

- Organizational structure did not ensure effective communication
- Failed to recognize previous near-collisions as unacceptable hazards
- Management focus influenced employee behaviors
 - Low priority on addressing train control system malfunctions



Probable Cause

- Failure of track circuit modules, and
- Failure to ensure use of a track circuit verification test developed following near-collisions in 2005
- Lack of a safety culture was a contributing factor





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